

**Louise Archer PTA**

**General Membership Meeting**

**November 12, 2014, 9:30 AM, Teacher's Lounge**

*Minutes*

Attendees: Kerry Blankenship, Heather Buescher, Ling Cao, Teralyn Carlson, Priya Chenthil, Jennifer Condra, Elaine Cudney, Tinnelle Davies, Reshma Eggleston, Mary Francischini, Keira Guthrie, Colette Hanson, Michelle Makrigiorgos, Keira Schwartz, Abby Shannon, Danielle Somers, Kelly Stratman, Elizabeth Toledo, Catherine Yeagle

I. Call to Order at 9:30 am by Kerry Blankenship.

II. Principal's Report by Michelle Makrigiorgos

a. First quarter has ended. Many parents attended conferences and she's glad that parents did. They are not required and some other schools chose not to offer conferences. She's grateful to her staff for taking the time to meet. She's trying to adhere to their contracts, which state their hours as 8:30 to 4:00. Meetings after school are out of their contract time, but the staff tries to be available and open.

b. Progress reports went home yesterday. If you have questions, please reach out to the teacher first. Hopefully you talked to you children and asked them if it was what they expected and were able to talk about goals for next quarter.

c. Book Fair and Sock Hop were great. It's a very hectic time, but it's wonderful. The kids are getting jump-started in reading again.

d. School grounds – Fox is still around. Most recently has been living underneath the music trailer. As of this morning, the contractor boarded up the entrance to the hole. The contractor has caught one, but there are others. The foxes are not approaching the students and do not appear to be sick.

e. Full-day Mondays – Very smooth transition for students. Teachers are feeling the time constraint. One of the greatest things to come out of it is the STEAM Lab. Principal's Coffee will follow this meeting where the STEAM Lab teachers will present information.

f. New Teachers – Welcome back to Jennifer Condra. There was an increase in special education needs in the school and Rachel Hammond just started today to meet that need. New IA named Betsy Chakin will start Monday.

g. Testing (presented by Jennifer Condra) - Students in 2nd grade took the CogAT two weeks ago as well as students in grades 3-6 who didn't have one on file and others through parent request. Scores for all will be back in January. There were some changes made by the State for

SOL tests. Third graders will take reading and math only. No changes for fourth grade. Writing was eliminated for fifth grade. Math and reading only for sixth grade students.

### III. President's Report – presented by Kerry Blankenship

#### a. Thank you's

i. Great American Fundraiser run by Ceci Campbell, Karen Landwehr and Christine Park

ii. 5K – Jennifer O'Beirne and Lara Hammock and their committee chairs

iii. Sock Hop - Teralyn Carlson, Heather Carey, Adele Hubbard and Chrissy Tiegan.

iv. Book Fair – Cheryl Bredehoeft and Susan Theon and Lauren Williams along with the other volunteers.

v. Elizabeth Maya is chairing the Human Relations Committee that is focused on helping the Counselors reach our students in need and ESOL population. Elizabeth is translating our Sunbeam into Spanish each week. Still a need for translators from Arabic and Farsi.

b. 5K and Great American wrapped up and we didn't make as much as we'd hoped on either of them. PTA is going to look at what we can do this year to make up for the \$10,000 deficit and will also consider timing for fundraisers next year. We are considering changing the 5K to the spring and we are taking a look at where we can cut costs. We're considering a jog-a-thon fundraiser in the spring tied to the Bunny Run that already happens. We'd like to hear what parents think about a read-a-thon vs. a jog-a-thon or other fundraising ideas.

c. We need to be very transparent about our needs. Maybe send a paper home (separate from the Sunbeam) telling parents what we do and what our needs are and asking parents to donate.

i. Some parents would prefer two large fundraisers and that's it. No small fundraisers. Would much rather give a larger amount once or twice per year.

ii. The majority of our population has not joined the PTA and that's a factor.

d. Mini grants have been awarded. Binder with information was passed around. We had budgeted \$10,000 and we didn't spend all of that. Held back on brass rubbings project for fifth graders (\$1200) and color printer cartridges (\$1000) for personal laser printer (used at the school) for Bonnie Alexander. The library asked for a wagon to help the students return books and Lesley Conroy donated one that Heather Buescher painted blue and yellow.

e. Teachers need iPad donations (any generation).

f. Computers are needed for students in need to check out. If you are upgrading computers for Christmas, please consider donating old computers to the school. We need about 10.

g. Event Dates

- i. Thanksgiving Lunch is next week.
- ii. Faculty basketball versus Wolftrap game is Saturday, March 14th.
- iii. Pizza Bingo is 2/20 or 2/27.
- iv. Christmas volunteer and staff party will be 12/8.

h. Upcoming Programs

- i. Real Assistive Technology Conference at Rachel Carson Middle School
- ii. Social Media Savvy Parent Program sponsored by Thoreau and held at JMHS will be next week
- iii. January 14 (after our PTA meeting) we will host a parent program on navigating social media. This will be directed toward parents of elementary school students.
- i. Helping Hands program needs help wrapping gifts.
- j. Before/Afterschool registration for next session will start in December.
- k. Millie McMahon is retiring this December after 30 years of service. On 12/19 at the sing-a-long, the school will honor her.

IV. Treasurer's Report – presented by Priya Chenthil

- a. Last week, the book fair made a similar amount to last year and about \$4000 will go to the school. We need people to shop through the school's Amazon link, especially with the upcoming holidays. So far, we've made \$50-\$75 per month. Other schools make much more.

V. Old Business

- a. Minutes approval from June, September and October meetings
  - i. Motion by Heather Buescher
  - ii. Seconded by Mary Francischini
  - iii. Approved

VI. New Business

- a. Read-A-Thon (reported above)

## VII. Program Announcements

a. Reflections (presented by Keira Schwartz) - The students' entries for this year's Reflections program have been received and the judging of those entries has been completed. All entries were judged by independent judges who are experts in the related field of art. Louise Archer's winning entries have been delivered to Fairfax County for further judging against the first place winners from other schools in the county. There will be a reception during the evening of November 24th to celebrate the students who participated in the program this year.

b. LA Reads (presented by Heather Buescher) – We are fully funded and will be able to provide ten reading level appropriate books to eighty children. We need volunteers for our first book delivery in November!

c. Thoreau 7th Grade Dinner (presented by Tinelle Davies) – The Thoreau 7th Grade Dinner is November 19th from 6:30-8:30. Tickets are \$10.00 each. You can buy them online through the Thoreau PTA website or at the door.

d. Thanksgiving Lunch (presented by Danielle Somers) – Lunch is next Thursday, November 20. Volunteers needed for the Thanksgiving Lunch on Nov 20th. Sign up link is on the PTA website.

e. Box Tops (presented by Elaine Cudney) – Box Tops are due by 11/18.

f. Dining for Dollars (presented by Kerry Blankenship) – At Tequila Grande on 11/17 and proceeds will help fund the Sunshine Committee.

i. Future Dining for Dollars suggestions include Sweet Leaf, Pure Pasty, and Noodle & Company.

g. Sunshine Committee (presented by Kelly Stratman) – Been keeping up with staff birthdays. Been doing uniform gifts – everyone gets a mug and a \$10 gift card to Caffe Amouri (purchased at a 10% discount). Many appreciation weeks upcoming the spring. They can always use gift bags and gift wrap.

Adjourned at 10:38 am. Next meeting is 12/10 at 9:30 am.